A TRIBUTE TO THE
BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

RECIPIENTS

In 1990 the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America introduced the Outstanding Service Award to honor individual members who made significant contributions to their club. Previously, the club awarded the Gaines Good Sportsmanship Medal to members the board determined were deserving of recognition. The primary purpose of the Gaines Medal was to recognize and honor good sportsmanship in the show ring.

By 1990 the BMDCA board felt that there were many avenues of recognition for exhibitors and wanted to present an award that not only recognized good sportsmanship but honored a member for contributing significant service to the club. The board wanted an award that would show appreciation to the members who give so much of themselves to their club and their fellow members. Thus, the BMDCA Outstanding Service Award was created. Awards were not made in 1989 and 1996.

Each of the people who have won this award in the past have made a difference to our club in their own unique way. Most of them have been members of The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America for many many years, some are founding members of the club. Please take a moment to reflect on the ways they have helped our club grow and develop. Some of these special people will be here in Tucson this week, please take the time to speak with them and say "THANK YOU so much for all that you have given to our club!" For those that couldn't be here send them a postcard expressing your best wishes and gratitude, I'm sure they would be thrilled!!

Respectfully submitted,
Deloris Handel

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The GCSBMDC would like to gratefully thank Deloris Handel for her work toward this wonderful memorial. We hope you'll treasure the words contained herein and enjoy them as much as we did when assembling them. Thank you Deloris!

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MARY ALICE ESCHWEILER

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GAINES GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP MEDAL 1985

Mary Alice Eschweiler is a woman of many firsts. Her very first dog was a Bernese Mountain Dog which she chose when she was only eleven years old. She is one of the first members of the BMDCA. It was 1969, and there were only about 100 people in the country that owned Bernese Mountain Dogs, when Mary Alice and several others founded what we now know as The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America. Mary Alice also achieved some of the first obedience titles on a Bernese Mountain Dog. Mary Alice and her bitch, Aya of Verlap, earned the first Companion Dog title and her bitch Ch. Dina de l'Armary was the first Bernese to earn a Utility Dog title. Throughout her years in the breed, Mary Alice and her dogs have earned many Championships, Obedience titles and Tracking Dog titles.

Some words of wisdom from Mary Alice: **Educate yourself about Bernese Mountain Dogs. Become knowledgeable about the dimensions and generations of a pedigree. Look at pictures of the grandparents and great grandparents and find out what the siblings are like.**

MARY DAWSON

MARY DAWSON

GAINES GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP MEDAL 1986

Mary Dawson is a founding member of the BMDCA and served as our first president. She says, "I've probably held every office in the club over the years". Mary is the chair of the Publications Committee which produces the BMDCA Yearbook.

In 1957 Mary was in Switzerland for a postdoctoral position. That was when she saw her first Bernese Mountain Dog. Mary didn't acquire her own Berner until 1966 when she returned to Switzerland and brought home a puppy. Mary imported a bitch, Zyta v. Nesselacker that took breed at the first National Specialty. Zyta also won some Group placements and was Best Veteran at another specialty. Over her 30 years in the breed Mary has bred about fourteen litters and uses the kennel name Hexliheim

Mary would like to see the dog's fronts improve with more chest. She also says the overall size of the dog is not substantial enough. Mary is concerned about the popularity of the Bernese Mountain Dog and the many health problems of the breed. Mary believes that if breeders became more aware of the heritage of the dogs, that knowledge would then shape the conformation and temperment of our breed. Mary reminds us that, "we are not here to improve the breed we are here to maintain the breed".

Mary has these words of wisdom for us:
When living with and training our dogs; be patient and give them time to grow up both mentally and physically. Become more involved with your club; serve on committees, contribute articles to the Alpenhorn, share your ideas and help get the work done!

MARTHA DECKER

MARTHA DECKER

GAINES GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP MEDAL 1987

Martha Decker first became acquainted with a Bernese Mountain Dog from a picture in the AKC breed book in 1970. She wanted to see these beautiful creatures up close, so she went to a dog show. Although, there were only two Berners at that show she was hooked!

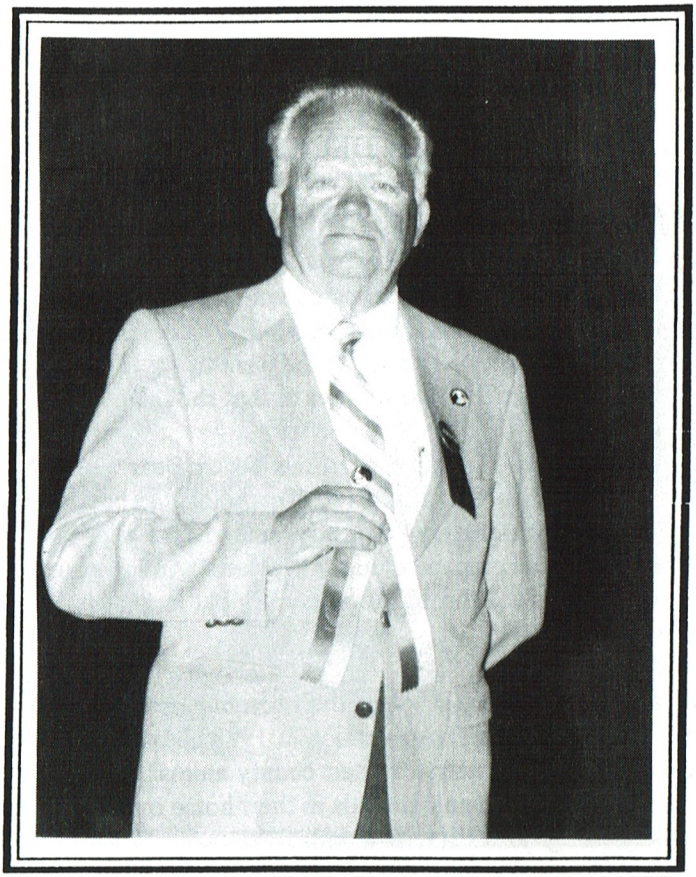
Martha and her beloved Teddy "Martha's Teddy Bear" earned titles in conformation, obedience and tracking. Teddy lived to be almost thirteen. Beauty "Sablemates Fair Lady" and , Martha. earned a championship and a companion dog title. Martha and her husband, Sam, have had Bernese throughout the years but lost their last one a few years ago.

Martha and Sam are very involved their community's Humane Society. They started this organization in 1988 because they saw a need for a humane alternative to their county animal shelter. The Deckers have fostered many animals in their home over the years and some of those dogs are still with them!

Martha wants us to know that "many, many purebred dogs go through the local Humane Society shelters that don't get rescued or adopted". She asks us to check out our local Humane Society shelter and when we can please help them with donations of money or volunteer time.

Martha joined the BMDCA in 1969 and is very proud to be a life member. She was the newsletter editor in 1980 and 1981. She organized the very first Tracking match and she says that getting people interested in Tracking gave her a lot of pleasure.

Martha gives us these words of wisdom:
Be as nice as the dogs are. Berners are companion dogs first of all, please don't forget this!



D. G. "DOC" JOHNSON

D. G. "DOC" JOHNSON

GAINES GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP MEDAL 1988

On April 16, 1995 Doc Johnson lost his battle with cancer. With his loss, the ranks of the BMDCA stand sorely diminished.

A member of the club since 1973, Doc had served as vice president, a board member, and a committee chair. For several years in a row he was master of ceremonies at various club functions. His ready smile, natural wit, and extensive supply of humorous stories enlivened many an otherwise dull gathering.

Doc and his wife, Gretchen, bred dogs under the Alphorn prefix. Doc actually owned an alphorn and brought it along to club gatherings. In 1977, the first homebred Alphorn champion was also the first Best In Show dog in the history of the breed, Ch Alphorn's Copyright of Echo. Copy was a BMDCA National Specialty winner, and several of his descendants also won nationals.

In 1988 Doc was the recipient of the Gaines Good Sportsmanship Award, a tribute he richly deserved. In 1993, he was selected by his fellow breeders to judge the Futurity. In addition to judging the breed, Doc also greatly enjoyed judging Junior Sportsmanship, and could always be depended on to give the kids a bit of advice or a lot of praise,

If you asked him what part he played In the success of his dogs, Doc would have been quick to explain that he was, "just the kennel help." All of us should be lucky enough to have kennel help of that caliber,

Sylvia Howison

BARBARA & MARTIN PACKARD

BARBARA and MARTIN PACKARD

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1990

Barbara and Martin saw their first Bernese Mountain Dog in 1956. They were in Switzerland on a business trip and saw,"the most beautiful dog". They approached the owner and asked, that familiar question, "What kind of dog is that?". The beautiful dog's name was Ringi and the Packards fell in love with him. Several years later the Packards imported their first Bernese from Switzerland. They named him Lucki and again, they were in love.

Barbara showed Lucki in both conformation and obedience, where he earned his championship and companion dog titles. In addition to conformation and obedience work, Barbara and her dogs have enjoyed tracking and carting. Barbara also started the first group of dog-handler squaredancers! She bred a couple of litters under the kennel name Bernerhaus" and now uses the name "Winedot", although she no longer breeds.

Barbara and Martin are founding members of the BMDCA and they organized the first regional Berner group, The San Francisco Bay Berners. Barbara is a major voice in Bernese rescue in the Bay Area and has assisted the two other local Bernese clubs with their rescue programs. It is Barbara's hope that the three clubs can work together to form a Northern California Bernese rescue organization. For many years Barbara and Martin have taken Berners that need to be re-homed into their home until the right people could be found for those dogs.

Martin's contributions to our breed and our club include developing the data base we use to catalog the information regarding the litters bred and the health and longevity of those litters. He also developed the computer program used by Berner-Garde and the GDC-Genetic Disease Control Registry. Barbara and Martin share the passion of their work with Berner-Garde They would like to see the BMDCA use Berner-Garde to address the health issues facing our breed because, "the future of our breed depends on addressing these health issues" .

Barbara would like to share this wisdom with us: **Please remember that the Bernese Mountain Dog is a shephard' s dog and they need to shadow their people. The pleasure of our beloved breed is the companionship they give us. It is the deepest type of companionship of any breed and we must let them be our shadows**.

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LORI JODAR

LORI JODAR

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1991

Lori Jodar served as BMDCA president in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993, She also served our club as vice president, secretary and chair of the Cancer Committee. Currently, Lori is the president of The Berner-Garde Foundation.

Lori has been involved with Bernese Mountain Dogs since the late 1970's. She shows her dogs very little and says she hasn't been to a dog show since the last Specialty. Lori did have a very special conformation win in 1981, Her dog Ch. Marens Ajax, was Best of Breed at the BMDCA in Wisconsin. She said, "I was just a novice handler and didn't quite know what to make of it, I was just out there showing my pet!" When asked if she ever did obedience work, she said, "Oh no, my dogs are smart enough but I'm not!" "My dogs and I go for a long walk everyday on the beach at Lake Michigan and that's what we like to do."

Lori is very positive about the breed today. She observes that one rarely sees dogs that limp and compared to a few years ago, there are very few shy dogs. Lori would like to see Berners shown in their natural appearance without all of the over grooming. She is concerned, as many are, with the surge in popularity of the breed and the many many health problems in the Bernese Mountain Dog.

Lori's focus for the next few years is to work toward improving the health and temperament of our breed through her work with Berner-Garde. She hopes we will all be supportive of their work. She said, "I'm not done yet, I'm going to take Berner-Garde to new heights!"

Lori's Wisdom:

Lori said she didn't have any wisdom but we know she does. So, when you see her this weekend, ask her to share a bit of her wisdom.

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SYLVIA HOWISON

SYLVIA HOWISON

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1992

Sylvia Howison was recognized for her significant contributions to the BMDCA and our breed when she was the 1992 recipient of the BMDCA Outstanding Service Award. If I were asked to present her with an award I would affectionately crown her, "Queen of the Berner People"! Many of us remember that night at the Specialty in San Mateo when Sylvia was critiquing our dogs in the hotel hallway at midnight! It began with just a couple of questions, but as word got out, more and more people lined the hallway in their pajamas and robes to have Sylvia go over their dogs! I don't think Sylvia got to bed until well I after two o'clock in the morning,

Sylvia and her husband, Harold, were "Dalmatian people" but Harold refused to handle the Dalmatians in the show ring because he thought they were too small. Sylvia asked him, just what kind of dog would he would like to show and the rest is history! Sylvia is a founding member of the BMDCA and has held various offices over the years, including president, secretary, and board member. She also began the Judge's Education Committee (she is a retired AKC breed judge) and was instrumental in designing the Illustrated Breed Standard.

The project Sylvia is most proud of is the work she, Esther Muller, Mary Alice Eschweiler, and Martha Decker did on the first revision of the breed standard. Sylvia says, " it was a major project and we put in many hours, days, and weeks of work." " We studied the standards of draft animals from all over the world." "Martha Decker even had an Army pamphlet on how to pick a good draft mule!"

Sylvia believes our beloved breed " has made remarkable strides in type, coat and temperment over the years. She commented that "25 years ago the dogs were terribly timid; with many bad bites; no uniformity in heads; and grossly unsound." "Those dogs could never finish today!" She does have some concerns for the breed, which include: their increasing popularity; puppy mills; and the health problems, particularly, sub-aeortic stenosis (SAS) and liver shunt, which are showing up in alarming numbers in Bernese Mountain Dogs. She says the BMDCA has always served as tireless guardians of the breed and is confident we will address these and the other serious issues facing our Berners.

Some Sylvia Wisdom:
Take as good care of your dogs as they would you. They are worth it!!

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JULIA CRAWFORD

JULIA CRAWFORD

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1993

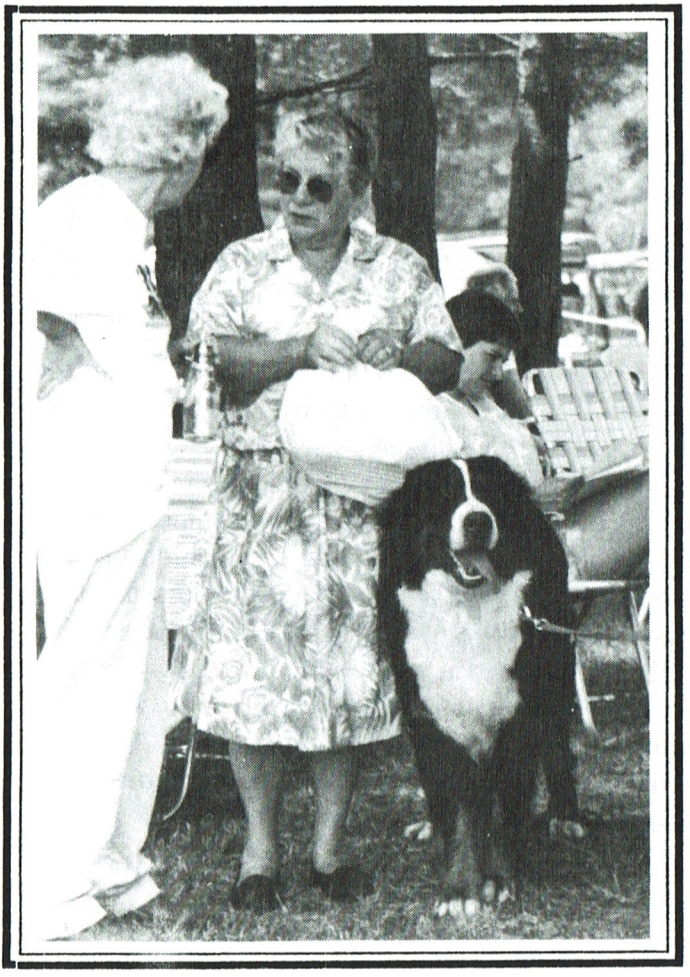
Many of us can look at our dog's pedigrees and see the kennel name Wymede. Julia and Elizabeth Crawford's kennel is one of the foundation kennels of our breed. Ch. Wymede's Luron Bruce was a particularly good representative of the breed and made a significant contribution to many pedigrees.

In addition to conformation, Julia participates in obedience work and has put Companion Dog titles on some of her dogs. She believes it's desirable for a pedigree to include an obedience title. To breeders just starting out, Julia recommends, purchase the best possible bitch, show your dog, and be honest with yourself about the dog you want to breed.

Some words of wisdom from Julia:

Integrity and ethics are of paramount importance in conducting ourselves as fanciers. *

* The 1995 Bernese Mountain Dog Annual



MARY JO THOMPSON

MARY JO THOMPSON

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1993

On December 14, 1993, Bernese Mountain Dogs and their people lost a long-time and unstinting worker for the breed. Mary Jo Thompton contributed to the breed in so many ways that it is impossible to mention all of them. A deserving recipient ... of the BMDCA's Outstanding Service Award. Mary Jo was the club's first AKC delegate and served the club's interest in AKC affairs for 11 years, dealing diplomatically, with courage and ingenuity, with situations that were not always pleasant. She also served the BMDCA as its president for four years, 1978, 1979, 1985, and 1986. Mary Jo's devotion to BMDs also evidenced in her breeding under the kennel name Roundtop.

... Perhaps her spirit will continue to guide us along the path from which she never veered striving for perfection of the Bernese Mountain Dog while protecting and advancing the interests of the breed.

Reprinted from THE BULLETIN, January 1994

Mary Dawson fondly remembers, "I became acquainted with Mary Jo when she was a Great Pyrenees fancier. She also had a very bright Sheltie that she worked in obedience. Mary Jo fell in love with my Bernese, and when she got her first Berner she was convinced she could do obedience with him; of course, she couldn't, he had her buffaloed!" "Mary Jo was a very good president, very organized, directed and strong in her guidance,"

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DEBBIE MULVEY

DEBBIE MULVEY

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1994

Debbie Mulvey had been a Rottweiler breeder for about ten years when a Bernese Mountain Dog stole her heart. Debbie was growing a bit weary of the Rottweiler temperment and always having to be on guard with her dog. She was at a dog show and the Bernese came into the ring after the Rottweilers so she decided to watch them. When she saw one of the Bernese lick the judge she knew that this was the breed for her!

Debbie shows in conformation and has enjoyed carting/parade work. However, "obedience I leave to everyone else!". She has bred a few litters over the years and uses the kennel name Grunberg, which means green mountain in German. Her foundation sire, Ben "Shepherd's Patch Carl B", was Winners Dog and Best of Winners at the 1980 National Specialty and went on to be a top producer for the breed.

Debbie's concern for our breed is that we are loosing type. She sees too many dogs that are small and too fine and elegant. There is a lot of over grooming and an over groomed dog does not truly represent the breed. Debbie believes we are losing sight of our breed's heritage.

Debbie was president of the BMDCA in 1971, she has served on the board of directors and "worked on a lot of committees". She is the Judges Education Coordinator and she worked on the new AKC breed video. Debbie would like to see the National club foster better communication between itself, the members and the local clubs. She would like to see a greater emphasis put on preserving our club's history and artifacts.

Debbie offers us this wisdom:
Have an appreciation for the past, educate yourself about the history of the breed. Remember, the dog comes first not our own desires.

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ESTHER MUELLER

ESTHER MUELLER

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1995

Esther Mueller has a long list of impressive credentials and she is very outspoken on many topics. However, she was reluctant to "brag" about her accomplishments. Esther joined the BMDCA soon after it was started in 1968. She is a retired AKC judge and has had judging assignments all over the world. She was invited to judge at two different Bernese specialties in Germany and one in Norway. She has also been the breed judge at two of our own BMDCA specialties and she judged veteran sweeps at the BMDCA Atlanta specialty.

When asked what were her concern regarding our breed, she said that we are losing breed type, most specifically, bone and heads. She also expressed some concern about temperment and cautioned breeders to be very careful about the temperments they are producing. Esther would like breeders to be more knowledgeable about the history and background of the dogs they are breeding. She fears that many breeders have no knowledge about the dogs in the fourth generation of their pedigree.

Esther's wisdom is:

Talk to old time breeders; ask questions; get as much information as possible; and don't take anything for granted.

Esther has only missed two specialties and that was due to judging assignments. Unfortunately, she is unable to be with us in Tucson, so she sends this greeting:

I miss everyone and wish you a very good time. Enjoy the dogs and don't forget about good sportsmanship!

ELIZABETH PEARSON

ELIZABETH PEARSON

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1995

Elizabeth Pearson is known to many club members as the ALPENHORN editor-extraordinaire! She is the person many of us call and complain to when our newsletter is late or there is a mistake in our ad. But how many of us have called Elizabeth lately to say thank you or tell her we appreciate all of her hard work?

Elizabeth got her first Bernese in 1984 and became involved in the National at that time. She has been the editor of the ALPENHORN since 1987. Elizabeth shows her dogs in conformation and obedience earning champion and companion dog titles. She also enjoys - carting with the dogs "just for fun, not competition".

When asked, how would you like to see our breed improve? She commented that she would like to see the dogs-look like the working farm dogs that-they are supposed to be. She would like to see a dog that is sturdier all around and can actually do the work of its heritage. Elizabeth is very concerned about the increasing popularity of our Bernese and the people that are taking advantage of that popularity for their own gain.

Elizabeth would like to see the BMDCA earmark more money for health studies and research, similar to the cancer study. There are so many health issues confronting out breed that we need to be more aggressive in this area. The Health Committee is a start but we need more.

Elizabeth would like to share this wisdom with us:

Love your dog everyday; you'll never know how long you will have them!

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GWEN RUSSELL

GWEN RUSSELL
BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1997

ART RUSSELL
BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1998

Gwen Russell served the BMDCA as treasurer for eleven years. She readily admits that she could not have done the job without her husband, Art. In Gwen's words, "We were the treasurer because Art and I are a team!" But, Art has a different view, he says, "Gwen is the front man and I'm just the guy behind the scenes.". Actually, Gwen was the official treasurer but, she and Art worked together all those years. Gwen did all tasks associated with the treasurer position such as the correspondence and banking while Art performed all the computer work. When the Russell's took over the job eleven years ago there was five thousand dollars in the treasury and all the records were handwritten!

Gwen related that she wasn't particularly frugal with her own money, but when she became BMDCA treasurer she "became a pit bull guarding the bones!" She says BMDCA members may remember her as somewhat conservative or even "obsessive" about preserving the clubs treasury but she'd like to think that this is one reason the club is financially sound

Art and Gwen got their first Berner from Julia Crawford over twenty-five years ago. Over the years they have shown in conformation and have done some obedience work. They have bred litters using the kennel name Camelot. The Russell's are very proud that a bitch they bred was the oldest Berner at last years Specialty and lived to be fourteen.

Art and Gwen share their wisdom:

Art: Work with your dogs to train them. But play with them also. Whatever you like to do, take your dogs with you. If you are outdoors people and like to hike for example, train your dogs to be hikers and take them hiking.

Gwen: Always expand your knowledge base. Talk to all of the breeders; and owners you meet. You are bound to learn something. If you only talk to your own breeder you will have a very narrow focus on the breed.

JACK LYTLE

BMDCA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD 1998

Jack Lytle is just the type of member the Outstanding Service Award was created to honor. He is humble about his contributions to the BMDCA and when asked what his role was, he said, "Oh I just help Elizabeth Pearson with printing the labels, that's all I do, nothing fancy". When pressed for more details, he explained that he assists the membership and subscription chairs with the input of their records. He also manages the data input for the Southeastern Wisconsin Club. Jack is also a site manager for Berner Garde.

Jack lost his Berner, Andy, about a year ago and is now "Bernerless". Nevertheless, he is willing to give his time, talent and energy to us, the BMDCA. He never showed his dogs or competed for titles and ribbons. Jack has never bred a litter. He said, "my dogs were my pets, we had a lot of good times together and I loved them very much." Jack is a very worthy recipient of the BMDCA Outstanding Service Award.

Jack would like to share this wisdom:

It is very important to get involved with your local club and support it. Because that is where we learn from each other.